

Salvador

I. A Vigorous Race in a Volcanic Land

By Hamilton Fyfe

Author of "The Real Mexicans," etc.

WHETHER a people which has seven times rebuilt its capital city after earthquakes, or other disasters volcanic in character, should be praised for its patience and courage or blamed for foolish obstinacy is a question which can be argued both ways. Those who do not know the Salvadorians will probably blame them. Anyone who has been in this small Central American Republic and made any study of the Hondurans will be more inclined to take the favourable view.

For of all the Central Americans they are the most energetic, the most intelligent, the readiest to work. This does not imply that their vigour of mind and body would be considered anything out of the way in North America or in Europe. It is not to be expected that people who live in a climate such as theirs should display the same energy or the same force of character as those who are braced by cold and compelled to wrest a living out of an unfriendly soil. Yet, when compared with their neighbours the Hondurans, they certainly compel admiration.

Compensations for Heavy Risks

Their territory is small, and has a larger population than Nicaragua, which is seven times its size, and than Honduras, which has six times as much territory. And a great part of it is subject to frequent and violent volcanic disturbances. Yet it is in this very part that the mass of the Salvadorians persist in making their abode!

The reason for this is that the volcanic regions are both more healthy and more suitable for farming than the strip of Pacific coast which lies below them or the high mountains which stretch

up behind towards the frontier of Honduras. This is the only one of the Central American countries which has no Atlantic seaboard. It fronts the Pacific only, and it is handicapped by not possessing one really good harbour. Passengers landing at the port of La Libertad used to be slung ashore from lighters in an iron cage. Now the landing system has been improved, and the port of Acajutla has become more important than La Libertad.

The Birth of a Mountain

Approaching the Republic by sea, you are sure to have pointed out to you, as soon as it is visible, the huge volcano called "The Lighthouse of Salvador." This was thrown up in 1770. Its other name is Izalco. Its appearance was preceded by rumblings under the earth and by shocks which terrified the folk on a cattle-farm standing where the crater now is, and sent them flying for safety. When they ventured back to see what had happened, they found the earth had opened and was belching out flames and thick smoke and molten lava.

It is said that within two months a mountain arose four thousand feet high. The aspect of the country was altered, and ever since then the volcano has been in eruption. It does no harm, but the people speak of it with superstitious awe, and believe that some day it will vent its wrath upon them again.

The Salvadorians are a nation of farmers, though they do some manufacturing as well. They grow, without any severe labour, coffee on the slopes of the mountains; sugar, cotton, and tobacco in the hot, damp coast region; and in one district the balsam, which is called "Peruvian," although it was



MIGHTY LEAF FROM THE PLANTAIN PLANT

In this land of burning sun nature has provided the means of abundant shade in the leaves of the plantain, a food plant allied to the banana. An old tradition connects the plantain with the forbidden fruit of the Garden of Eden

never found in Peru. It got that name from being shipped long ago through the Peruvian port of Callao. The balsam is the sap of a big tree, so thickly-leaved that it makes a darkness in the forests, hundreds of miles in extent, where it grows. The bark is scraped or cut, and the juice compelled to flow. As a cure for asthma and other chest complaints it has a world-wide reputation; it is used also for making soaps and scents.

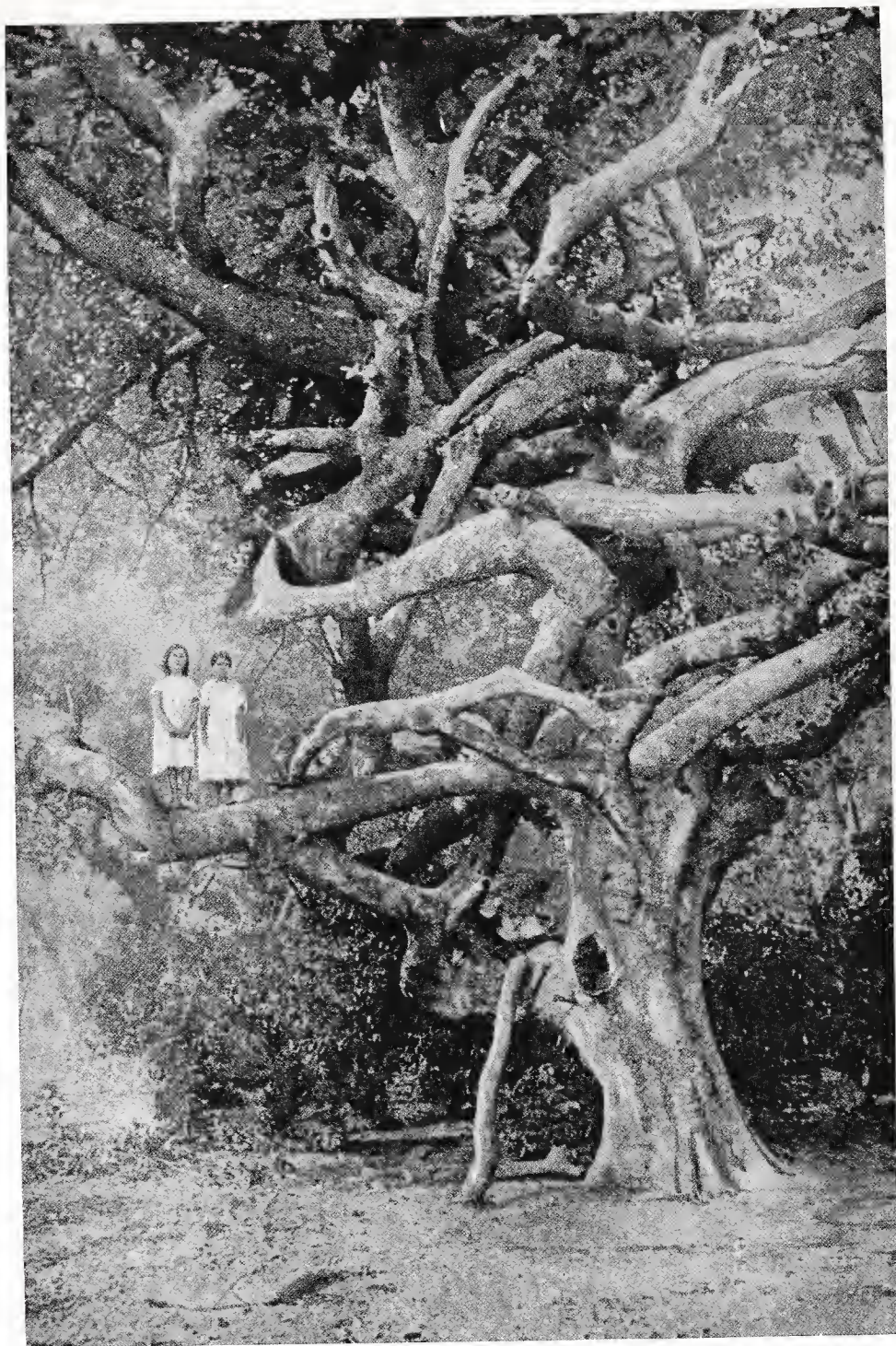
The trees from which this balsam is taken will not grow well anywhere but in one particular district, inhabited by

Indians. They consider it their own, and make a handsome profit by preparing and selling it. They are known as the Balsimos, and they practise a kind of socialism based on the principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." The heads of the community are old men, who act as both governors and priests. To them all earnings are handed over, and at intervals distributed to families in proportion to their requirements.

Little is known for certain about their system. It is supposed that they have vast sums of money buried in the forest, and that every year they add to these with strange religious ceremonies. They are darker, taller, less communicative than the people of Salvador generally, who are almost entirely a mixed race, and one of the best that have resulted from Spanish-Indian marriages. They have certainly shown more enterprise than any

other people on the isthmus. They were the first to break away from Spain, and their earliest ambition was to become a state in the North American Union, which proved that even then they were under the influence of enlightened ideas. They were the first also to struggle against the domination of the priests.

Quite early in their independent history they refused submission to the Archbishop of Guatemala, and chose a bishop of their own. The Pope threatened to excommunicate the entire



CHILDREN OF THE FOREST IN THEIR LOFTY PLAYGROUND

In the intricacy of its branches, which writhe and twist about the trunk, the amata tree provides the most exciting possibilities for play. Hide-and-seek and all the breathless joys of children's play have a particular thrill when there is a drop of some feet for the incautious; and, when tired, the players can rest shaded by the leafy canopy above



BULLOCK WAGONS IN THE PATH OF THE EARTHQUAKE'S DEVASTATING CONVULSIONS

Though the damage done by a simultaneous earthquake and volcanic eruption was sufficient to warrant despair of such a dangerous site for their capital, the Salvadorians at once set to work to restore order in their streets. Their terrible neighbour displayed its awful powers of destruction in 1854, again in 1873, and then in 1917, and on each occasion the inhabitants went quietly to work and rebuilt their wrecked homes. The wagons are clearing the streets of rubbish

Photo, American Museum of Natural History



WOMEN OF SAN SALVADOR TURN OUT TO CLEAR THE RUBBISH THAT WAS A STREET

In this street the damage by earthquake has been severe. The rubbish has been collected in heaps and the stout-hearted women of the city are filling their wide and shallow baskets. Each load is dumped into a bullock wagon. The construction of the buildings can be seen where the seismic shocks have shaken the plaster from the walls. The cathedral has been rebuilt entirely of wood, the better to withstand the activities of the mountain that soars eight thousand feet above

Photo, American Museum of Natural History

SALVADOR & ITS PEOPLE

nation, but that made no difference whatever to their sturdy attitude. Later they wisely fixed at a reasonable amount the marriage fees of the Church. Each congregation has a voice in choosing its priest, and the priests elect their bishop ; thus the whole ecclesiastical system has been given a democratic basis.

Intelligent Democracy in Being

So democratic is the constitution of Salvador that elections to Congress take place every year, yet universal suffrage has not been adopted. All married men are given a vote if they have not been convicted of crime, if they do not owe money, if they have some regular occupation other than domestic service, and if they have never received money for services rendered to a foreign power.

Unmarried men can only vote if they are property owners. The idea is to limit the franchise to those who are doing something useful for the community. On the whole, the government is such as an industrious, quiet, sensible folk deserve. Their finance is well managed, and their debt is small.

Their methods of cultivation might, of course, be improved. The tobacco planters, for example, might hit upon some plan of clearing the tobacco plants from grubs and flies better than driving in flocks of turkeys among them and letting the birds pick the pests off. It can be imagined that they pick off a good deal else !

Paucity of Urban Centres

Indigo used to be grown to great advantage, but it did not succeed in competing with the aniline dye. It needed very careful treatment, cutting just at the right moment ; also it took up a large area of ground compared with the space required for other crops, and the ground needed a great deal of working. For these reasons it has gone out of cultivation. Yet the soil is so accommodating and the climate so kindly that its loss has been little felt. Owing to the people being mostly

farmers, there are few towns ; and those which have grown up are of small size. Apart from the capital there are only two of importance, San Miguel, where there is a fair every year in February, which attracts buyers from all parts of Central America, as that of Nijni-Novgorod used to draw its attendance from every region of Russia and the Middle East ; and Santa Ana, a busy commercial centre, built in a steep situation among green downs, which send torrents pouring through its streets in rainy weather.

The capital, San Salvador, has a magnificent site also which not only gives it very fine views, but keeps it cool and healthy. Nearly three thousand feet high, it looks down to the sea, eighteen miles distant, and in every other direction up to mountains. It is not a picturesque or interesting town. No place could be that has suffered from eleven earthquakes and has been three times almost completely destroyed.

Resilience After Disaster

One of these disasters occurred in 1854. The surface gave one tremendous heave, and in less than a quarter of a minute the town was in ruins. Again in 1873, 1917, and 1919 the town suffered. The vigour of the Salvadorian character was shown then, as before and since that time, by the brisk clearing away of the ruins and the rebuilding of the place. But it could not be supposed that it should be very solidly rebuilt. Still, it has some fair public offices, and though the appearance of the houses is dull, they have delightful gardens, green all the year round, thanks to the water which runs down the centre of the streets and is supplied for watering purposes.

There is a state theatre, where travelling companies appear, and where amateur performances are often given to crowded audiences. These include not merely music by local composers, and singing by the favourites of the hour, but also poems and speeches. These are, indeed, the most popular items of the programme. Any youth



SALVADORIAN GUARD OF HONOUR IN PRESIDENTIAL PROCESSION

One of the signs of progress in all the small republics of Central America is the demeanour of their soldiery. So often these present a slipshod appearance on parade or the martial pomposity of musical comedy. The troops that form the guard of honour on state occasions in Salvador look very different, and even from a distance suggest quiet efficiency in both pose and equipment



MESTIZOS OF A VILLAGE IN SALVADOR'S CATTLE DISTRICT

Salvador's cattle district provides meat for the entire Republic, and a quantity of hides for export. Oxen almost universally replace horses, so that from this locality is drawn also much of the means of transport. The carts have sides of poles like those illustrated in the chapter on Portugal, and may have a covering of hide. In these vehicles the countryman takes his produce to market

who has a good flow of language can make his name easily in Salvador, especially if he celebrates some patriotic theme. They are a fervently patriotic people, and keep many festivals commemorating famous events in their history. The early part of such holidays they give up to piety, and the later part to noise. In the mornings they go to church; after that they delight themselves with brass bands and fireworks.

While there are in the capital many reflections of prosperity, yet there are so many charitable societies and establishments in the city that one is driven to infer the existence of a large class below the poverty line.

To be poor in this country does not, of course, carry with it either the reproach or the discomfort which are associated with the receiving of relief, either public or private, among European peoples. The mass of the Indians have never been anything but poor. So long as they are at work they have enough for their needs, which are primitive. When they fall sick or suffer from a disinclination to work they are dependent on help from others, usually their own folk, but in Salvador the well-to-do make provision for those who are not so fortunate as themselves.

Six miles from San Salvador, a pleasant ride out through woods, is a



SAMOA: ISLAND WARRIOR IN WARTIME DRESS

With his collar of sharks' teeth, barbaric headdress and ornaments, and fearsome arms, he recalls a phase of native life when tribal warfare rent this Lotus Land of the Southern Seas

To face page 4392

Photo, Brown & Dawson



HOUSEWORK OUT OF DOORS: KNEADING DOUGH ON A CART SHAFT

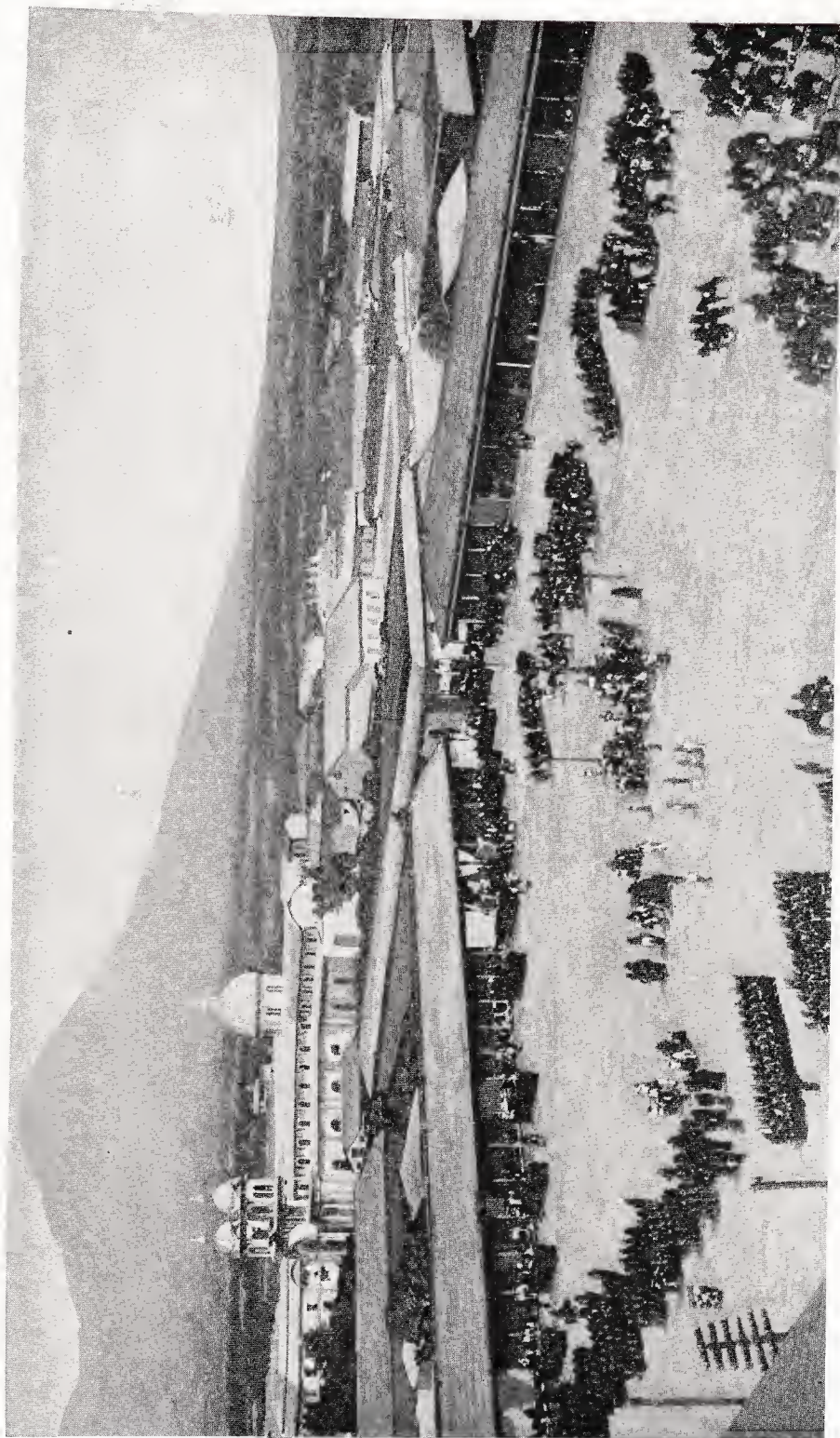
Most housewives in Salvador have to make their own bread, and it is pleasant in the cool hours of the earlier morning to take the little bread-trough out of doors and exchange local gossip with the young wife from next door. The poles of the bullock cart have been drawn together for a table, and the double yoke lies in the cart itself

lake bathing resort; a number of hotels with pretty gardens add the attraction of comfort to those of nature; the place is an embodiment of pleasure and peace. Yet as recently as 1880 this Lake Ilopango went through a series of alarming and violent changes, caused by volcanic disturbances far below the surface of the earth.

First the water rose, then it suddenly sank thirty-four feet. The ground around it heaved, there were rumblings which told of explosions beneath it, vapours and mephitic gases escaped. Finally, a volcano arose in the centre of the lake, and through this the fiery energy of the underworld found a vent.

The furious eruption seemed to relieve the troubled earth of its malady, for after it there was quiet again.

The Republic is luckier than most of its Spanish-American fellows in possessing a labouring class which is tractable and industrious, and a governing class which makes genuine efforts in some directions to improve the civilization of the people. It makes efforts to educate them, and it picks out young men and women who show promise as writers, painters, or musicians, and sends them to Europe to be trained at the expense of the state. They go mostly to Paris. Here, as elsewhere in Spanish-America, the French are admired



TROOPS OF THE REPUBLIC UNDER REVIEW IN THE BARRACK SQUARE AT SAN SALVADOR CITY

Salvador maintains a standing army of some sixteen thousand officers and men, and the authorities have been at pains to produce smartness and verve. Some batteries of mountain artillery, for which local topography gives fine scope, will be noticed on the right. Behind are the domes of the wooden cathedral that has been painted to resemble stone, the real article being impracticable as building material in view of the activity of Mount San Salvador, seen in the background

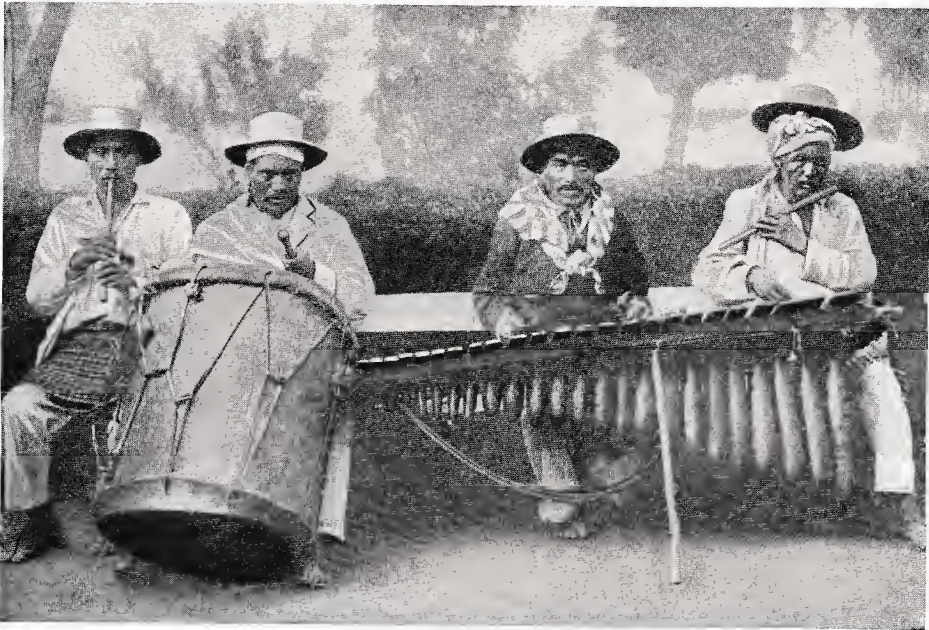
SALVADOR & ITS PEOPLE

for their taste, and the Germans for their thoroughness and perseverance. The trade of Salvador had got mainly into German hands before the Great War. Many even of the British vice-consuls were German traders, a fact which did no good to British commerce.

The greater success of the German merchant is attributed to his careful study of the conditions of his market, to the trouble which he took to have his wares packed attractively, and to the

they work faithfully for all who treat them well. Too obstinately attached to their own ways to make good house-servants, they are in their proper element as guides through difficult country. They find their way by instinct, choose the best camping places, care for the pack-mules, and serve a traveller well.

These Indians have good features and contented expressions. They are short of stature, able to run great distances at a dog-trot, and able to carry great



DRUM AND FLUTE ACCOMPANIMENT TO THE MARIMBA'S MUFFLED MUSIC

In the marimba, an advanced type of the gourd piano found throughout Africa, an example of which is the Liberian balafon, illustrated in page 3326, the lines of development of musical instruments are well indicated. On the discovery that pieces of wood or metal of a certain shape made varying sounds, and that the longer the piece, the lower the note, the scale naturally evolved

easy terms he would grant in order to secure business. Further, the Germans were not so exclusive as the English nor so ready to ridicule the customs of the country as the Americans. They lived with the people, joined in their amusements, adapted themselves to their habits, made their social relations serve their business ends.

The intelligence of the natives is proved by the skill shown by many who were trained, mostly by Germans, as mechanics. They are clean and honest :

burdens. They wear loose cotton trousers, baggy jackets, and wide palm-leaf hats. The women dress neatly, are modest and attractive. Round their heads they wear scarves or kerchiefs for the purpose of keeping off the heat of the sun.

In the Indian homes the patriarchal system prevails, the authority of parents and grandparents is acknowledged and respected. Many attribute the good qualities of the native to the discipline which this system entails.

Salvador

II. Four Centuries of Steady Evolution

By Percy F. Martin

Author of "Through Five Republics of South America," etc.

SALVADOR (or El Salvador), while the smallest, is topographically and, in regard to its products and people, the most interesting of the six Republics of Central America. It is possessed of the most dense population, perhaps the most industrious and well-ordered of the smaller Latin American states. In the gorgeousness of its scenery, however, lies one of its greatest dangers, for this natural beauty has been brought about by violent seismic disturbances, which, while ruthlessly destructive on the one hand, have been productive of much scenic splendour on the other. Not only are the mountains distinguished by their height and strange verdure; their formation and their proximity to the world's earthquake centre endow them with a fascinating terror all their own.

Pedro de Alvarado invaded the country in 1524, coming thither from Mexico by way of Guatemala. After less than four years of Spanish savagery and extermination, complete dominion had been established, and, in 1528, the first European city, San Salvador, was founded, only to be soon afterwards destroyed. The three hundred years of Spanish rule afford very little occasion for comment, the history of progress being uneventful and the course of government similar to that pursued in other Latin American possessions of the Spanish Crown.

There would appear, however, to have been rather less popular discontent in this province of the huge vice-royalty of Guatemala, of which it formed but a

small although important part. But it was impossible for the Spaniards to withstand the effect of the revolt against their dominion which occurred in other parts of South and Central America, so that in September, 1821, when Guatemala severed her connexion with Spain, and the Central American Confederation was formed, Salvador joined in the uprising.

At first consenting to annexation with Mexico, in 1839 the relationship, proving untenable, was severed, and further attempts upon the part of Morazán to reunite this with the other small states of Central America failed; his enterprise, repeated too often, cost him his life (1842).

Serious, indeed, was the position of the newly-arisen Republic of Salvador, since its leaders who had been sent to attend a "Junta" held at Guatemala City were met and overawed by armed bands; their deliberations were forcibly interrupted and suspended; some of them, such as Bedoys, Maida, and others, were assassinated, while Gainza, President of the Provisional Junta, turned traitor and went over to the enemy under promises of a high post in the Mexican Government.

Salvador was the nearest province to Guatemala, and the centre of liberalism; thus it was not long before the patriots of the country took up arms in the defence of their newly-acquired freedom, and they claim the strange distinction of having fought the first seriously organized battle ever waged on Central American territory among Central Americans themselves.

Party jealousies and personal ambitions

brought about political disintegration over a course of years, and fierce internecine struggles continued to rage. In 1885 General Justo Rufino Barrios, President of Guatemala, sought to establish what Morazan had failed to carry out; but his efforts ended equally disastrously. The first well-considered national law of Constitution was followed by a second in 1883, but this, in August, 1886, was discarded and another Constitution—that still in existence—was promulgated.



THE REPUBLIC OF SALVADOR

SALVADOR & ITS STORY

Under its terms the first president to be elected was General Menéndez, his term lasting until 1890, when he was succeeded by General Carlos Ezeta. The third president, General Rafael Gutiérrez, in due course was followed in the order named by General Tomás Regalado, Don Pedro José Escalón, General Fernando Figueróa, Dr. Manuel Enrique Araujo (who was assassinated during his term of office, February, 1913), Don Carlos Meléndez, and Señor Jorge Meléndez.

In November, 1907, the Amapala Conference, held between the presidents of Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, was summoned for the purpose of establishing peace, but failed. In December, 1908, a further effort to stir up revolution in Salvador was made by the then hostile president of Nicaragua, José Santos Zelaya, who instigated an attack upon his fellow-president, General Fernando Figueróa. In April, 1909, the U.S.A. found it expedient to despatch warships to Nicaraguan waters in order to prevent a further incursion into Salvadorian territory.

In July, 1919, further revolutionary movements were chronicled, the more serious having been that headed by General López Gutiérrez, an unsuccessful presidential candidate, who broke into revolt in the region of Pariso, causing sanguinary encounters to take place between his rebel troops and government forces, the encounter taking place close to the Nicaraguan frontier. In May, 1920, General Araujo, another aspirant to the presidency, came into violent conflict with government troops in a bitterly-contested battle fought near Arcato, in Northern Salvador, quite close to the Honduran frontier, but met with defeat. Both uprisings were finally suppressed, but not without considerable loss of life.

Repeated refusal had been returned by Salvador to invitations to join a

Central American Union. But at the end of June, 1921, the government of the day signed an agreement for confederation with Guatemala and Honduras. The federation consists of an offensive and defensive alliance, from which the U.S.A. are debarred because of racial difference.

Feeling between Americans and Salvadorians is not friendly. On December 20, 1919, the Foreign Secretary of Salvador requested the Washington Government to state clearly and definitely the intentions and interpretations of the Monroe Doctrine. On February 29 following, the United States Government replied that "a categorical answer to the question raised" was in preparation, setting forth Dr. Wilson's interpretation of the famous doctrine. This was not forthcoming, however, and since then little further has been heard of the matter.

A short-lived insurrection in the capital, San Salvador, occurred in June, 1921, but was productive of little trouble.

Salvador has been singularly unfortunate in the number and severity of natural disasters overtaking it. Apart from the many volcanic eruptions referred to, including the disastrous earthquake of May, 1919, which destroyed the greater part of the capital—a violent conflagration broke out in the city in the following month of July, when a large number of houses, the newly-erected radio-station, and attendant buildings, covering one and a half blocks in the centre of the city, together with several residences and hotels, were destroyed. Almost simultaneously there was an outbreak of yellow fever, the port of La Unión being placed in quarantine (June, 1920).

Several cases of bubonic plague were discovered, the outbreak constituting a serious menace to the neighbouring states, causing the other Central American nations to place Salvador in rigorous quarantine.

SALVADOR: FACTS AND FIGURES

The Country

Lies on the Pacific coast of Central America, being bounded west by Guatemala, and north and east by Honduras. Save for narrow coastal plain, Salvador is mainly mountainous and abounds in volcanoes. Several of these are active, and the country is subject to periodic earthquakes and destructive eruptions. Bulk of population inhabit a fertile valley between two enclosing ranges. Much of the soil is very productive. Principal and only navigable river, the Lempa, some 200 miles long. Climate varies with altitudes, the coastal belt being forest-covered and unhealthy, while interior is lofty and more bracing. Total area about 13,000 square miles, with a population of some 1,500,000, more than half being of mixed Spanish-Indian stock.

Government and Constitution

Salvador became an independent republic on seceding from the Central American Federation in 1839. Legislative power in hands of Congress

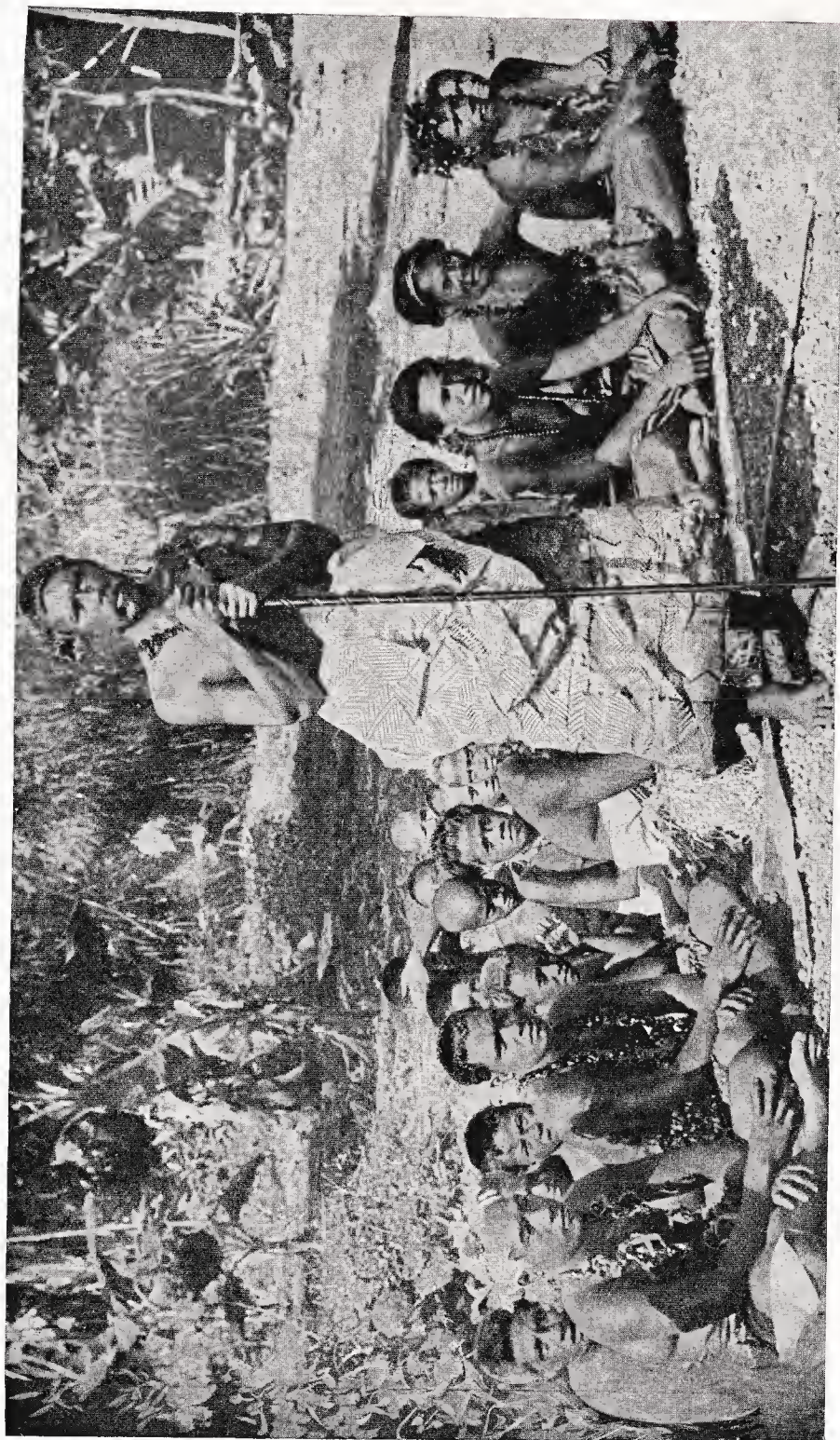
consisting of forty-two deputies representing the several departments elected annually by universal suffrage. President exercises powers of executive and is elected for four years.

Commerce and Industries

Agriculture chief occupation of inhabitants, and coffee is the principal product. Rubber, sugar, tobacco, and cocoa are also cultivated, and gold, silver, iron, copper, and mercury are found. Cattle, sheep, and horses are numerous. Imports for 1921 totalled £2,629,737, and included hardware, drugs, flour, and cottons. Among exports, which totalled £3,738,297 for same year, were coffee, sugar, balsam, hides, and rubber. Standard coin, the gold colon; nominal value, 2s. 1d.

Chief Towns

San Salvador, capital (estimated population 90,000), Santa Ana (70,000), San Miguel (34,000), San Vicente (30,000), Sonsonate (16,000).



MELLIFLUOUS ORATORY OF THE NATIVE TULAFALE CHARMS THE EARS OF THE KANAKAS OF SAMOA

Punctilio is dear to the heart of the Samoan, most courteous of all Polynesians. He finds good opportunity for its display in grave public discussion of matters of general importance, and holds in high estimation that tulafale, or orator, who can use his dignified native language in the grand manner, and charm an audience with his silver tongue. In the days when tribal warfare was frequent, conflict was preceded by formal discussion of the procedure to be followed, and ceremonious debate not uncommonly ended in mutually satisfactory explanation of alleged unfriendly acts.